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News Release

For Immediate Release: April 15, 2016

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Lifeguards receive new equipment through community donations

Four county lifeguard towers were outfitted with new solar-powered PA systems this month and all lifeguard towers received high-powered megaphones, thanks to donations from community supporters.

The Kaua'i Lifeguard Association (KLA), a non-profit agency aimed at promoting ocean safety and supporting the Kaua'i Fire Department's Ocean Safety Bureau, held its Third Wave fundraiser in October of 2015. Funds raised during the event allowed for the purchase of four new solar-powered PA systems, which were donated to the Ocean Safety Bureau and installed at the Kekaha, Po'ipū, Hanalei, and Hā'ena towers. Donations also paid for high-powered, weatherproof megaphones to be used at each of the 10 lifeguard towers across the island.

"Having the megaphones and the solar-powered PA systems at key lifeguard towers will greatly improve our lifeguards' ability to communicate to the masses," stated KLA Event and Marketing Director Andy Melamed.

Syngenta Hawai'i donated \$2,500 to install the new PA system at the Kekaha lifeguard tower. The company's community outreach team recently visited Ocean Safety officials at MacArthur Park to view the new equipment.

"We are so happy that the Kaua'i Lifeguard Association presented this opportunity to support our first responders in their vital mission," stated Syngenta Kaua'i Outreach Manager Beth Tokioka. "Kaua'i's lifeguards are true professionals and deserve the best tools we as a community can provide."

The full cost of the new equipment was funded solely by donations. The PA systems, including installation, were roughly \$32,000 and the megaphones cost \$4,095.

“The Ocean Safety Bureau continues to receive much-needed equipment such as the PA Systems, jet skis, trailers, and other life-saving tools that we wouldn’t be able to purchase through county funds alone,” stated Kaua’i Fire Chief Robert Westerman. “We are very grateful to the Kaua’i Lifeguards Association, Syngenta Hawai’i, and many other generous community donors who see the value of supporting our mission to save lives on and around Kaua’i’s beaches.”

Melamed added, “Lifeguards are seeing up to 2,000,000 beachgoers a year and having the proper equipment at the towers will help to save lives, which is the goal of the KLA Wave project. This year’s upcoming Fourth Wave event will focus on saving lives at Kaua’i’s unguarded beaches.”

The group looks to support the department’s goal to expand its Roving Lifeguard Unit, which consists of a team of two to three lifeguards equipped with a 4x4 truck, a jet ski and a trailer. The roving unit acts as a mobile lifeguard tower and patrols various beaches to assist with ocean rescues and prevention efforts.

For more information on the Kaua’i Lifeguard Association and its efforts, visit the KLA website, www.kauailifeguardassociation.com.

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Above photo: Representatives from Syngenta Hawai‘i’s community outreach committee recently visited the Kekaha lifeguard tower at MacArthur Park to view the tower’s new solar-powered PA system. Syngenta donated \$2,500 to facilitate the new system’s installation. Top row, left to right: Ocean Safety Supervisor Kalani Vierra; Water Safety Officer Anthony Parraga; Adam Wojak; Water Safety Officer Sanoë Ho‘okano. Bottom row, L-R: Arthur Brun; Fire Chief Robert Westerman; and Syngenta Hawai‘i Kaua‘i Outreach Manager Beth Tokioka. **Photo Credit: Sarah Thompson**



Above Photo: Ocean Safety Supervisor Kalani Vierra tests the Kekaha lifeguard tower’s new solar-powered PA system, as Water Safety Officer Anthony Parraga looks on. **Photo Credit: Sarah Thompson**